DEVELOPING BUSINESS SCHOOL STRATEGIES: A PRACTITIONER-ORIENTED CONCEPTUALIZATION

Seelhofer, D.

This conceptual paper examines the rationale for strategic planning in business schools and outlines an applied strategy development and controlling process that has been in use at a major Swiss business school for several years, contributing to a significant strengthening of the school's strategic position. It explains the strategy hierarchy and the strategy planning cycle, describes how to conduct a consistent strategic situation analysis, and details how to develop and manage a coherent strategy at all levels (normative, strategic, tactical, and operational), including type, nature, and structure of the corresponding documents.

Keywords: strategy development; strategic planning; business school
JEL classification: J2

1. Introduction

Business and management are among the academic disciplines with the largest commercial allure, beckoning to students with high-paying jobs upon graduation. This is reflected in the fact that, according to AACSB's 2015 Business School Data Guide, the number of business schools in the world grew more than 30% between 2010 and 2015, with an estimated global total of almost 16,500 such institutions now in existence. In line with this, the number of business graduates at e.g. Swiss universities rose almost seven-fold between 1982 and 2012, while the relative share of this discipline compared to all disciplines simultaneously rose from 10% to 20%, according to the Swiss Federal Statistical Office. Furthermore, in contrast to engineering or the natural sciences, educating business majors is comparatively cost-effective, while non-subsidized business degrees like MBAs or EMBAs fetch a handsome price in the open market even when offered by lesser-known schools, which makes the business school an important asset for many cash-strapped universities in this day and age of ever-shrinking public funding.

At the same time, the pace of environmental change has accelerated, including in the subsidized education sector. Increasing competition at both the national and international level, sinking public funding, decreasing corporate training budgets, and the advent of the online learning challenge, together with generally rising regulation and the globally growing importance of institutional quality labels such as AACSB or EQUIS are posing considerable challenges to business schools everywhere. Simultaneously, their ability to act freely in the marketplace may be constrained by university-wide rules (concerning e.g. admission processes, marketing practices, or invoicing procedures) that are summarily applied to them but do not necessarily account for the specific nature of their business.

Notwithstanding these developments, today's public business schools are often supposed to be run like a private enterprise, must cope with an increasingly demanding competitive environment, and are subjected to a multitude of external influences to which they must react. Many have therefore started to adopt the very frameworks they developed for other organizations (Khalifa, 2010). Yet, business schools frequently seem to fail at this challenge, at least according to a 2014 article in The Economist (provocatively titled 'Those who can't, teach') which argues that the nature of academia – particularly the tenure system – and the sort of 'herd mentality' that derives from it may be chiefly responsible for this development. In support of this, Welsh & Carraher (2009) found that, in contrast to the literature's emphasis on strategic unity, the mission statements of entrepreneurship centers at 214 Catholic colleges and universities in the United States showed little, if any, relationship with their parent organizations' mission statements.

A stringent strategic planning process – adapted to their particular needs – should enable business schools to increase their environmental fit by systematically recognizing (and adapting to) environmental challenges, helping them to make appropriate strategic decisions and efficiently utilize their resources, in line with findings for other industries (cf. Hahn & Powers, 2010). The literature on strategic planning in these institutions, however, is scarce. In fact, back in 1993 Robertson complained about the lack of research on strategic management in higher education, and a review of the extant literature reveals that the same holds true for strategic planning today. This paper attempts to address this research gap and contribute to sound strategic planning in institutes of higher learning (particularly business schools) by outlining a tried and tested framework which has been in successful use at large, AACSB-accredited Swiss business school for several years, contributing to a significant strengthening of the organization's market position over this period.

2. Literature Review

Strategic planning has been variously defined as "an intellectual view of the future, based on taking concrete actions now for hedging against future events" (Chou, 2006), as "a commonly used management process, employed by managers in both the private and public sector to determine the allocation of resources in order to develop financial and strategic performance" (Jennings & Disney, 2006), or as "the process by which firms derive a strategy to enable them to anticipate and respond to the changing dynamic environment in which they operate" (Hewlett, 1999). The topic has been broadly discussed and examined, both in general (cf. e.g. Armstrong, 1982; Meissner, 2014) and with its application to a particular context such as small and medium-sized enterprises (O'Regan & Ghobadian, 2002), faith-based organizations (Morgan, 2004), emerging market firms (Glaister et al., 2008; Glaister et al., 2009; Aldehayyat & Twaissi, 2011), airport management (Kenville, 2005), urban planning (Wilkinson, 2011), or the healthcare (Moldof, 1994; Zuckerman, 2003; Alexander, 2006), banking (Lynn, 2000), maintenance (Al-Turki, 2011), and automotive (McLarney, 2003) industries. Good strategic planning was found to be valued by the stock market (Desai, 2000) and positively linked with firm performance (Robertson, Roberts, & Porras, 1993; Miller and Cardinal, 1994; Glaister et al., 2008) as well as other organizational indicators such as employee satisfaction and retention rates (Al-Shammari & Hussein, 2007), although the strength of the relationship may be moderated by various contextual factors, such as firm size, capital intensity, and environmental turbulence

(Miller & Cardinal, 1994) or the level of diversification (Stimpert & Duhaime, 1997). Brown (2004) reports that strategic management skills also contribute to the performance of institutes of higher learning.

Strategic planning is valuable because it is able to bring together an organization's leadership and its various stakeholders in order to formulate strategic direction under environmental uncertainty (Alexander, 2006), thereby keeping organizational objectives and resources in synch (Patnaik, 2012). As such, it constitutes "the framework of choices that determines the nature and direction of an organization" (Friedman, 2003), although its real value may lie in the “intellectual journey that the participants take in exploring the future” (Blatstein, 2012) and by generally fostering strategic thinking. In order to implement the results of this intellectual process, organizations need to engage in formal strategic planning (Khuong, 2002) that includes all functional areas (McLarney, 2003). At the same time, *excessive* planning may lead an organization to be paralyzed ("paralysis by analysis") while waiting for the planning process to complete, thus missing vital trends or fail to adapt quickly to on-going changes in the environment (Mintzberg, 1980, 1994). Any strategic planning process must thus be formalized enough to identify relevant environmental trends while enabling quick decision-making and strategy-developing processes that are sufficiently streamlined to keep up with the pace of environmental change. As Bartling (1997: 20) puts it: "Strategic planning is merely a tool".

In essence, the classical approach to strategic planning emphasizes goals and objectives, resource allocation, and plans (Chandler, 1962). Strategy is considered a deliberate, formal, top-down, rational process initiated by top management, based on a thorough environmental analysis, and aimed at designing a cohesive overall strategy for the organization (Volberda, 2004). As such, strategic planning is concerned with the regular, periodic, and coordinated running of the organization's business, while *strategic foresight* is employed to explore and *strategic initiatives and programs* are used to change the business (Müller-Stevens & Bauer, 2009), e.g. by reinforcing or developing specific strategic capabilities needed in the future.

A 1979 study by Ang & Chua found that, at the time, over 94% of large U.S. corporations used some form of long-range planning process and over 80% of managers saw this as beneficial. Smaller organizations (who tend to run a greater chance of failure because of their limited resource base) may be able to limit their strategic exposure by avoiding errors in decision-making processes (Bruderl & Schussler, 1990) because, among other things, strategic planning leads to adaptive thinking (Aram & Cowen, 1990), although a too formalized process may jeopardize their entrepreneurial spirit and agility (Khong, 2002).

3. Conceptual Framework

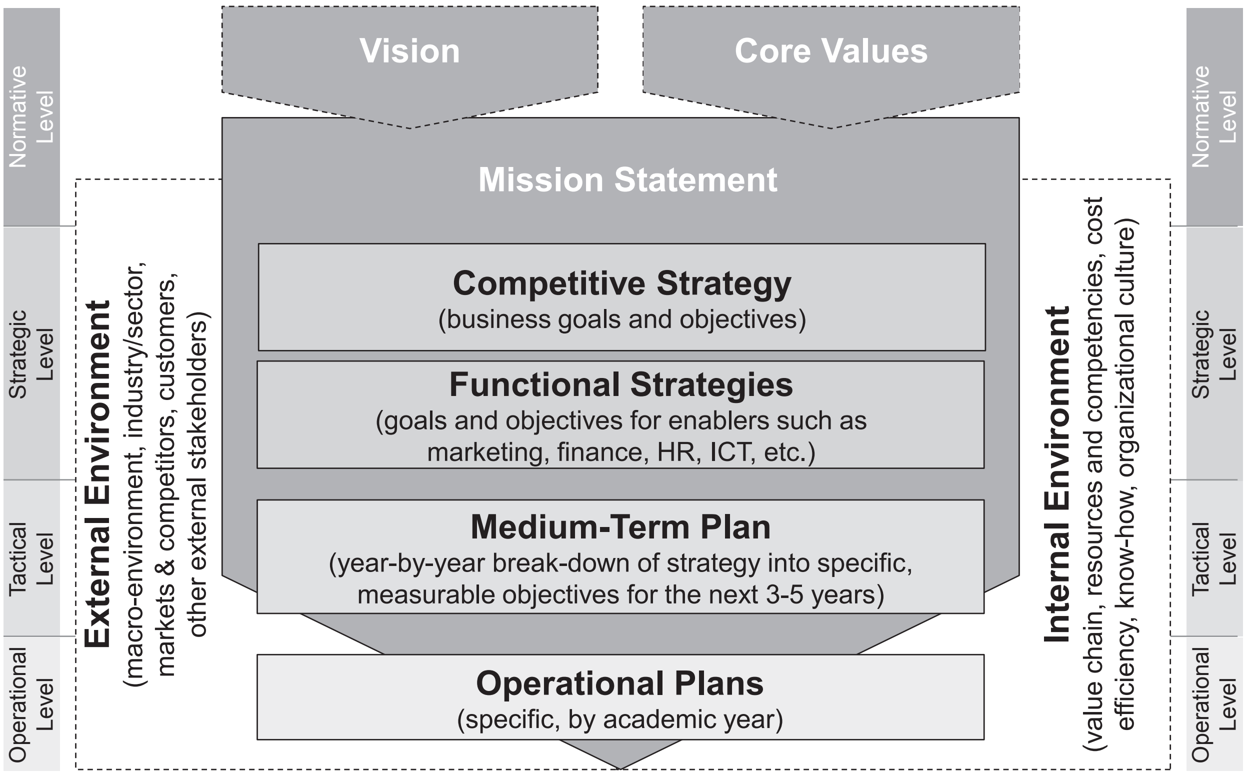
The conceptual framework introduced in this paper is based on contingency theory's notion of environmental fit (cf. e.g. Thompson, 1967; Hage & Aiken, 1970; Hall, 1977), combines the market-based (cf. Ansoff, 1972) and resource-based (cf. e.g. Porter, 1985; Connor, 2002) views of strategy, and follows an intuitive, easy-to-understand approach. It consists of, one, a description of the strategy hierarchy; two, an introduction of a cyclical planning process appropriate for a business school; and three, an explanation of the basic steps in the strategy development and management process.

3.1 The Strategy Hierarchy

Strategy development happens at the normative (very long-term), strategic (long-term), tactical (medium-term), and operational (short-term) levels.

At the normative level, the starting point for strategic planning should be the organization's mission statement (Johnson, Scholes, & Whittington, 2011), possibly alongside other fundamental documents such as a vision and/or a value statement. These fundamental documents provide guidance to strategic planners (Bleicher, 1991), and substantially changing them has a profound effect on the organization and its strategies, which subsequently will need to be re-developed. Specifically, the mission statement defines the general boundaries within which strategic goals and objectives may be set. In a business school context, this is reflected in AACSB's mission-centric accreditation standards. If the school is part of a larger university or enterprise, its mission statement (and associated documents) should also be aligned with the parent organization's corresponding normative documents.

Figure 1 | Strategy Hierarchy



Source: Author

At the strategic level, strategies and plans may be developed once the organization's norms have been established. According to Büchler (2014), strategic work happens in four main phases: one, collecting (or generating), evaluating, and interpreting all available relevant information to create insights about the organization's external and internal environment; two, creating, evaluating, and selecting strategic options based on the results of the previous step to fit said environment; three, creating and distributing the necessary documents; and four, implementing, controlling, and optimizing the strategy. Commonly, organizations develop two types of strategies: a competitive strategy that explains how the organization wants to win, and a functional strategy which covers aspects such as marketing, finance, HR, ICT, and so on (Johnson, Scholes, & Whittington, 2011) and details how the competitive strategy will be supported. Occasionally, deliberations about which products to offer in which markets (Ansoff, 1972) are split off from the competitive strategy and codified in a separate product-market strategy.

At the tactical level, these strategies are then operationalized in a rolling medium-term plan (usually for the next three to five years) that includes concrete, quantitative and/or qualitative targets for each year in the timeframe, step by step leading up to reaching each strategic (i.e. long-term) objective.

Finally, at the operational level, specific and measurable objectives for the relevant upcoming short-term period (for universities often the next academic year) are included in an operational plan.

This strategy hierarchy is detailed in Figure 1.

3.2 Writing and Controlling the Strategy

Before writing a new strategy, a thorough analysis of the strategic situation should be conducted in which the organization's external and internal environment are carefully and systematically assessed to identify, in essence, opportunities and threats in the environment as well as strengths and weaknesses of the organization. This analysis will yield valuable information about crucial factors that need to be addressed in the strategy. Following this, viable strategic options can be generated, evaluated, selected, and the formal strategy written. Once the strategy documents described in the next section have been created, they need to be put into action and, since the world does not stand still after a strategy has been developed, the implementation must be monitored and the continuing appropriateness of the strategy reviewed regularly reviewed in order to identify and initiate necessary corrective measures. For this, a strategic planning cycle is essential.

The Strategic Planning Cycle

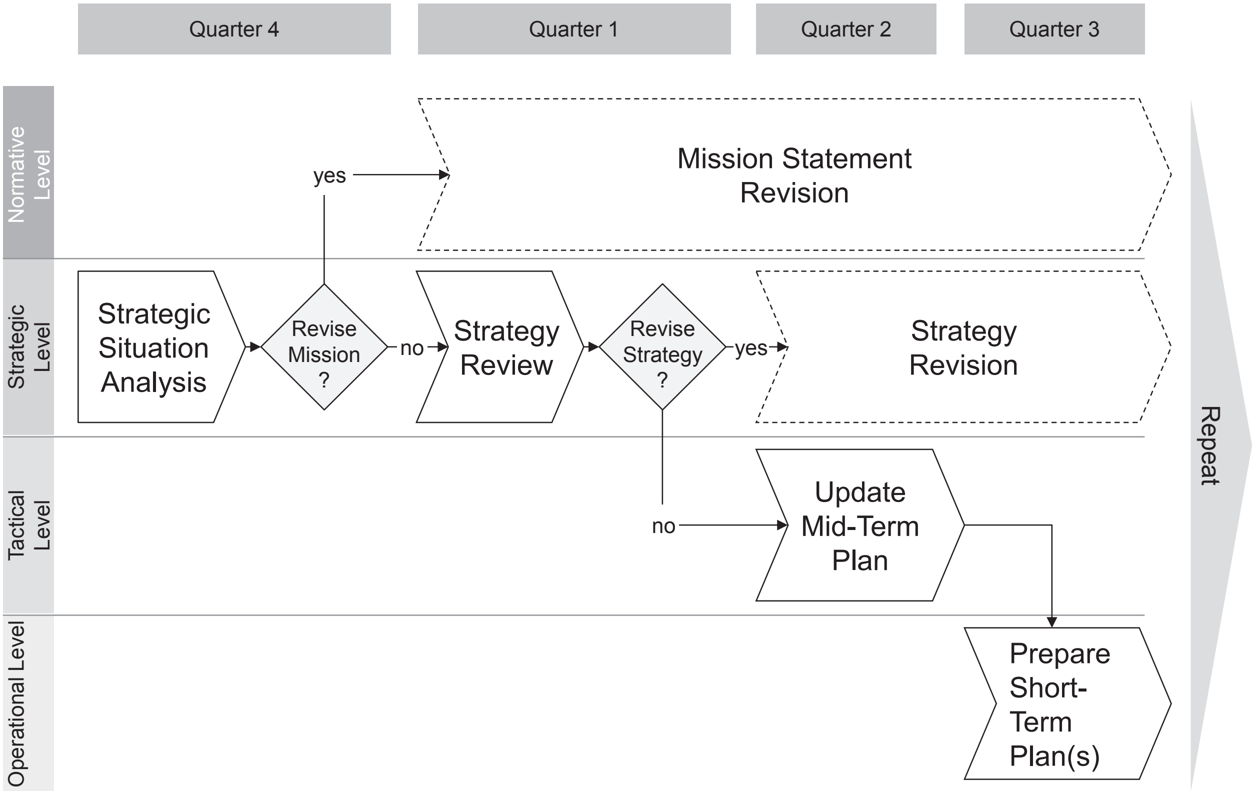
A vital success factor in strategic work is closely controlling the implementation of strategies (Alter, 2013). One way of doing this is by conducting periodic strategy reviews, taking into account shifts in the organization's context and environment. Based on such a review, the organization can then decide what measures should be taken, including changing parts or even all of the strategy.

A strategic planning cycle determines which strategy document is written or undergoing a planned review at what time. Naturally, major events or shocks inside or outside the organization may also warrant ad-hoc reviews and revisions. Monitoring the external and internal environment should thus be an on-going activity.

An example strategic planning cycle is depicted in Figure 2.

The cycle starts with the strategic situation analysis, a thorough assessment of the organization’s external and internal environment with the aim to systematically identify opportunities and threats present in the environment as well as strengths and weaknesses of the organization. It should be done in regular intervals (e.g. every fall, striking a balance between avoiding generating pointless paper and missing vital trends). Based on this analysis, the school will have to decide whether to revise the mission statement and, if not, the competitive strategy (e.g. because new competitors have emerged or customer requirements have changed) or any of the functional strategies (e.g. because new technologies have become relevant). This decision is usually taken in the period following the situation analysis, i.e. in quarter one when following the sample cycle. Like all strategic issues, this is a board-level decision, although business schools may also involve the faculty

Figure 2 | Sample Strategic Planning Cycle



Source: Author

If the strategy does not have to be revised, then the rolling mid-term plan can be updated in the following period, i.e. in quarter two according the sample cycle. This includes removing the completed previous year, adding a new year at the end, and determining the necessary strategic steps (cf. sample structure in Table 5).

Following this, the operational plan or plans for the upcoming year can be written (cf. sample structure in Table 6).

Strategic Situation Analysis

The strategic situation analysis is the most comprehensive and, in terms of sheer work, time-consuming of the strategy planning and review documents. It follows a straight-forward process that thoroughly assesses the organization's external and internal environment, followed by step-wise aggregation to identify key aspects and factors.

The process starts with an examination of the organization's external environment. According to Johnson, Scholes, & Whittington (2011), it should be analyzed by focusing on the macro-environment, the industry, the competitors, and the customers. In the case of a business school, additional external stakeholders such as teacher or student unions as well as governments or suppliers should also be considered.

The macro-environment consists of political, economic, socio-demographic, technological, ecological, and legal factors that influence the organization now or in the future.

Table 1 lists an example structure for this analysis.

Table 1 | Sample PESTEL Analytical Structure

Sphere	**Facts (what can be proven or is highly likely?)**	**Insights (what does this mean for us?)**	**Conclusions (what do we therefore need to do?)**
Political	...	...	...
	...	...	...
	...	...	...
Economic	...	...	...
	...	...	...
	...	...	...
Socio-demo-graphic/ (incl. cultural/social)	...	...	...
	...	...	...
	...	...	...
Technological	...	...	...
	...	...	...
	...	...	...
Ecological	...	...	...
	...	...	...
	...	...	...
Legal	...	...	...
	...	...	...
	...	...	...

Source: Author

Following the macro-environmental analysis, the next focus is on the industry or sector. A popular framework for industry analysis is Michael Porter's (1980, 2008) *five forces analysis* which, in essence, aims to identify the structure and major driving forces of the industry as well as to predict the industry's current and future attractiveness. Porter lists five competitive forces that determine this: the bargaining power of suppliers and customers, the threat of new entrants and substitute products or services, and the rivalry among existing competitors. In the 1990s, his framework was extended by other researchers such as Nalebuff & Brandenburger (1996) who studied the impact of existing products and services already in the market and added *complementors* (organizations producing complementary products, which may compel them to enter into strategic alliances) as a sixth force.

Table 2 contains an example structure for this analysis.

Table 2 | Sample Five+1 Forces Analytical Structure

Factor	Facts (what can be proven or is highly likely?)	Insights (what does this mean for us?)	Conclusions (what do we therefore need to do?)	Importance (1=low, 3=high)	Industry attractiveness (c=current, f= future; 1=lowest, 5=highest)
Competitive rivalry	…	…	…		1……..2……..3……..4……..5
	…	…	…		
	…	…	…		
Threat of potential entrants	…	…	…		1……..2……..3……..4……..5
	…	…	…		
	…	…	…		
Bargaining power of suppliers	…	…	…		1……..2……..3……..4……..5
	…	…	…		
	…	…	…		
Bargaining power of buyers	…	…	…		1……..2……..3……..4……..5
	…	…	…		
	…	…	…		
Threat of substitutes	…	…	…		1……..2……..3……..4……..5
	…	…	…		
	…	…	…		
Complementors (impact of related products & services)	…	…	…		1……..2……..3……..4……..5
	…	…	…		
	…	…	…		
Overall attractiveness					1……..2……..3……..4……..5

Source: Author

Together, the macro-environment and industry analyses enable the organization to identify the *key drivers of change* (Kemelgor, Johnson, & Srinivasan, 2000), i.e. those factors that will be chiefly responsible for shaping the way the business works in the future. These can be used to gauge the appropriateness of a strategy or to generate alternative scenarios about the business's future development (for an overview of scenario development techniques, cf. e.g. Bishop, Hines, & Collins, 2007).

Next, the markets served are analyzed with regard to the various customer segments found in them and the organization's main competitors are identified, e.g. by using strategic groups' analysis (c.f. e.g. Dranove, Peteraf, & Shanley, 1998; Flavian & Polo, 1999; DeSarbo et al., 2008). Main competitors are those who are active in the same strategic group, i.e. serve the same market segments as the organization. In the case of business schools, this is usually defined by the institution's positioning (e.g. premium or low-cost), geographic reach, and programs offered. Once identified, these companies' strengths, weaknesses, and strategies are assessed as far as possible. Since competitors will usually try to keep these aspects confidential, this step frequently includes a lot of guesswork, and the business school should be careful to include only verifiable information in its analysis (or clearly mark estimates as such, including the methodology used to derive them, so that their validity may be discussed on the board or within the faculty).

Next, customer segments (which are either currently served or are under consideration to be served in the future) are analyzed with regard to which actors make the actual 'buying decisions', i.e. who chooses a particular program or school (e.g. in the case of Bachelor education this is often the parents, while for Executive MBAs the employer frequently has a large say in the choice of school), and what they want. These 'actors' are called the *strategic customers* (Wilhelm, Gueldenberg, & Güttel, 2013), and understanding their motivations is key to serving their actual (rather than perceived) needs.

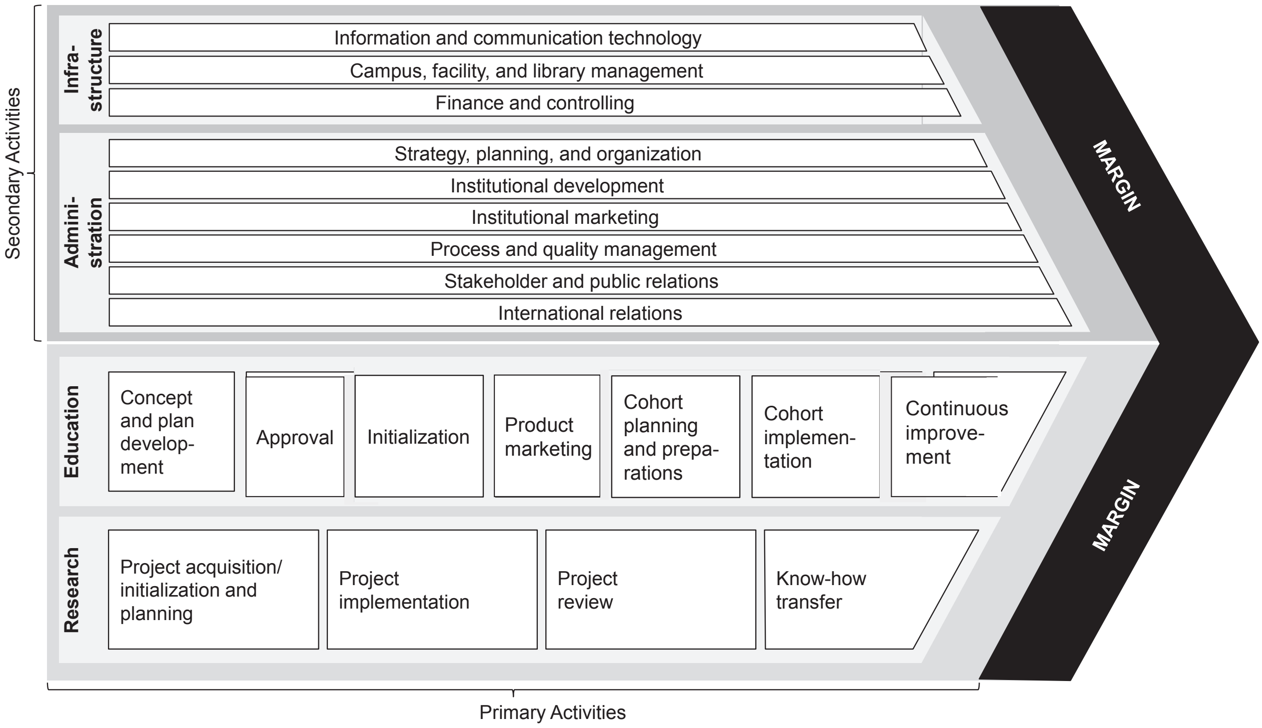
Finally, other important external stakeholders such as governments, corporate partners, alumni organizations, suppliers, or special interest groups like teacher or student unions, need to be identified and their core expectations determined.

Aggregating the information derived through the various steps above leads to the *critical success factors*, i.e. those aspects that absolutely must be addressed by any winning strategy (cf. e.g. Freund, 1988; Ward, 1988; Russel & Tippett, 2008; Mishra, Dangayach, & Mittal, 2011), and the opportunities and threats the business school faces. For example, the existence of strategic alliances has been found to be a critical success factor in the international marketing of education programs (Mazzarol, 1998) and may thus constitute both an opportunity (by creating and using such alliances) and a threat (by failing to do so).

The second major focus area, the internal analysis, basically examines two issues: one, the value chain of the organization, and two, its strategic capabilities. The value chain idea was made popular by Michael Porter (1985) and refers to the chain of activities a firm performs that add value to the finished product or service while using up resources. Porter's original model refers to five primary (inbound logistics, operations, outbound logistics, marketing and sales, and services) and four secondary (procurement, technology development, human resources, and maintaining an appropriate firm infrastructure) activities. Primary activities add value directly (meaning the costs generated by them can be directly attributed to a particular product or service), secondary activities only indirectly (constituting overhead). By thoroughly analyzing the various activities, value-chain-related strengths and weaknesses and particularly cost saving potentials as well as the core value (i.e. those aspects in the value chain that absolutely have to be preserved and, if possible, further strengthened) may be identified. Additionally, the insights from this step can be compared to those from the analysis of the strategic customers, leading to a better understanding of how the value chain setup is (or is not) in line with their buying criteria.

In the case of a business school, while Porter's original model is helpful to think about the school's value chain in a generic sense, adapting it to more accurately account for the specific nature of its business seems helpful. Figure 3 presents an example value chain for a business school.

Figure 3 | Business School Value Chain



Source: Author; adapted from Porter (1985).

The other step in the internal analysis involves a close look at the organization's strategic capabilities. Strategic capabilities are defined as 'complex bundles of skills and accumulated knowledge that enable organizations to coordinate activities and utilize their assets (Day, 1990) in order to create economic value and sustain competitive advantage (DeSarbo et al., 2005). In other words, strategic capabilities – in contrast to basic capabilities, which are needed to run the business – help the organization win. For example, marketing capabilities permit the business school to take advantage of its environmental monitoring and technological capabilities and realize effective marketing programs (DeSarbo et al., 2005), and superior problem solving has been identified as a strategic capability of successful consulting firms (Simon & Kumar, 2001).

To be strategic, a capability must be of value to the customer, better than that of the majority of competitors, and difficult to imitate or replicate (Hubbard, Pocknee, & Taylor, 1997). Stalk, Evans and Shulman (1992) found that, by stringently ensuring strategic capabilities fit the environment and incorporating them into a consistent strategy, firms can outperform their less coherent competitors. Strategic capabilities may result from the business school's resources and competences (Johnson, Scholes, & Whittington, 2011), cost setup (Porter, 1985; Parnell, 2011), organizational knowledge creation and utilization (Campos & Sanchez, 2003; Shaw et al., 2007; Cruceru, 2015), or its corporate culture (Dixit & Nanda, 2011; Akbar Ahmadi et al., 2012). Each of these points needs to be analyzed in order to identify strategic resources and competencies (to be incorporated

into a winning strategy), cost efficiency boost potentials, helpful and harmful know-how transfer mechanisms, and central aspects of the corporate culture that may support or undermine certain strategies. This part of the analysis leads to an increased understanding of the school's strategic capabilities and, together with the results from the previous step, eventually its strengths and weaknesses.
The steps of the strategic situation analysis are summarized in Figure 4.

Figure 4 | Steps in the Business School's Strategic Situation Analysis

<table>
<tr><th>Environment</th><th colspan="2">Focus</th><th>Intermediate Results</th><th>Aggregated Results</th><th>Final Results</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="6">External</td><td colspan="2">Macro-environment (PESTEL)</td><td rowspan="2">List of key drivers of change (KDC; "change drivers")</td><td rowspan="6">List of critical success factors (CSF)</td><td rowspan="6">Threats and Opportunities</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Industry/sector analysis</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Competitors and markets</td><td>Strategic groups
Market segments</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Customers</td><td>Strategic customers</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Other external stakeholders</td><td>Key stakeholder expectations</td></tr>
<tr></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="5">Internal</td><td colspan="2">Value chain analysis</td><td>Identification of core value and primary cost drivers</td><td>Evaluation of cost savings potential;
link between value chain and customer decision criteria</td><td rowspan="5">Strengths and Weaknesses</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="4">Strategic capabilities</td><td>Resources and competencies</td><td>Identification of strategic resources and competencies</td><td rowspan="4">Evaluation of strategic capabilities</td></tr>
<tr><td>Cost efficiency (ratio analysis)</td><td>Cost efficiency boost potentials</td></tr>
<tr><td>Organizational know-how</td><td>Analysis of knowledge transformation mechanisms</td></tr>
<tr><td>Corporate Culture</td><td>Key aspects of corporate culture</td></tr>
</table>

Detailed ← **Information Density** → Aggregated

Source: Author; partly based on Johnson, Scholes, and Whittington (2011), O'Regan, and Ghobadian (2002).

Generating Strategic Options

Once the environment is understood as well as possible (considering time and resource constraints, which always exist) and key opportunities, threats, strengths and weaknesses have been identified, this knowledge can be utilized to generate strategic options. A strategic option is one possible direction (of several) to go for the organization that allows it to achieve environmental fit. To be strategic, the option must significantly shape the organization in the long-term, require extensive resource commitments, and thereby exclude other strategic options.

A strategic option can thus be compared to a one-paragraph summary of the organization's intent that, after it has been selected from several competing options, will then need to be fleshed out in various strategy documents (see Table 4) along the strategy hierarchy. Generating viable strategic options is not usually a straight-forward process but often includes a lot of discussions among top managers and the faculty as well as – depending on the organization's culture and the sensitivity of the strategy – additional stakeholders such as teacher or student unions. The starting point for generating strategic options are the insights gained through the strategic situation analysis described above.

There may or may not be a large number of alternative strategic options, but any real, viable option will need to, one, take the results of the strategic situation analysis into account (by, for example, expressly addressing critical success factors), and, two, provide for a sufficiently different development path compared to other options that the organization is forced to choose between them (otherwise they are really only variations of the same option). Additionally, according to Johnson, Scholes, & Whittington (2011) options need to be feasible regarding the organization's resources and constraints, acceptable with regard to their (particularly financial) consequences, and suitable for the current external and internal situation, considering the organization's capabilities and stakeholder expectations.

It is recommended that the business school generate three to five strategic options. There are a number of tools and approaches in the literature about how to generate these, such as Weihrich's (1982) TOWS Matrix. The business school may also derive options through brainstorming and/or an intellectual process of deduction by considering and discussing the results of the strategic situation analysis. An example strategic option for a business school could be "become the regional leader in online learning", if the school's strengths and the environmental opportunities allow for this. Whichever way options are generated, the ramifications of each alternative must be thoroughly considered, each option evaluated based on a pre-determined set of criteria, and finally a small number (often only one) selected for implementation.

Table 3 provides an example of how alternative strategic options might be evaluated. Once the strategic direction has been determined, the strategy needs to be operationalized, using e.g. the balanced score-card (Lawrie & Cobbold, 2004) or any other kind of approach that allows conveying the strategy effectively to relevant stakeholders.

Based on the deliberations of the previous sections, the business school should develop, at a minimum, the following documents: at the normative level a mission statement; at the strategic level a competitive strategy and any necessary functional strategies; at the tactical level a medium-term plan; and at the operational level a short-term plan. At least the mission statement should also be made broadly available (on the website, in brochures, on meeting room posters, and so on). Table 4 provides details about each document's purpose, timeframe, revision and controlling rhythms, and influencing factors.

Table 3 | Sample Strategic Option Evaluation Matrix

Option	ONE	TWO	...
Label	...	...	...
Characterization			
Common aspects of all options	...		
Key aspects of each option	...	...	...
Strengths/ advantages	...	...	...
Weaknesses/ disadvantages	...	...	...

Killer criteria (based on the literature)						
Feasible considering resources and constraints	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Acceptable in its consequences	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Suitable for external and internal situation	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Complete regarding critical success factors	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Overall	**Met**	**Not met**	**Met**	**Not met**	**Met**	**Not met**

Additional decision criteria (set by the organization)							
Criterion	**Weight (1-3)**	**Rating (1-5)**	**Score (Weight x Rating)**	**Rating (1-5)**	**Score (Weight x Rating)**	**Rating (1-5)**	**Score (Weight x Rating)**
...							
...							
...							
Overall score (sum)							
Recommendation to decision-maker(s)							

Source: Author

Depending on the business school's culture, the final decision is either made by the dean, the school's governing body, or the faculty.

Table 4 | Core Business School Strategy Documents

Level	Documents	Purpose	Timeframe	Revision	Con-trolling	Influences
Normative	Mission Statement	Explains positioning and value proposition to customers	Long-term (indefinite)	Only when necessary (external or internal impulse)	Yearly	University mission
Strategic	Competitive strategy	Explains how the School wants to win	Long-term (5-7 years)	Infrequent (following changes in the external or internal environment)	Yearly	University strategy
	Functional strategies	Explains how the business strategy is supported	Long-term (5-7 years)		Yearly	University policies and/ or functional strategies
Tactical	Medium-term plan	Explains which steps are taken each year within the planning horizon to reach the strategic goals and objectives	Medium-term (3 to 5 years)	Yearly	Twice a year	Business strategy
Operational	Short-term plans	Explains the specific, detailed operational objectives for the next operational period (usually the academic or calendar year)	Short-term (1-2 years)	Yearly	Quarterly	University operational (e.g. annual) goals (if provided), medium-term plan

Source: Author

Normative Level: Mission Statement – In the opinion of best-selling author and speaker Steven Covey (1989), work on the mission statement "is the single most important work because the decisions made there affect all other decisions." The mission statement, possibly alongside a vision and/or value statement at either the business school's own or some parent organization's level, is intended to "capture the true identity of an organization as well as encapsulate a framework for realistic and clear objectives to be articulated and followed" (Welsh & Carraher, 2009).

There are no binding rules that govern what a mission statement should contain or how it should differ from a vision statement. In fact, actual mission and vision statements vary wildly. Frequently, the mission statement answers the WHAT and WHERE questions: what does the organization offer its customers and where does it want to be active? In other words, the mission statement describes the positioning and the value proposition, i.e. the customer groups the organization strives to serve, the added value it offers them, and the target areas (both in terms of businesses and geographic reach) in which it wants to be active. In contrast, the vision statement then answers the WHO question, i.e. who an organization wants to be in the (distant) future and what its long-term profile should be. It also frequently includes a statement about the organization's core value(s), although these may also be incorporated in a separate value statement. Because of the fundamental nature of these normative documents, all relevant stakeholder groups should be involved in their development, and the result should be made widely available.

Despite this theoretical differentiation between documents according to their purpose, real-life mission statements frequently constitute a combination of mission and vision or even all three.

Strategic Level: Competitive and Functional Strategies. Generally speaking, a strategy should consist of a limited number of goals which can then be operationalized in a number of objectives. Specifically, Hambrick & Fredrickson (2005) remark that a good strategy should cover the following points: arenas (product categories, market segments, geographic areas, core technologies, and/or value-creation stages on which the organization focuses); vehicles (internal development, joint ventures, licensing/franchising, acquisitions); differentiators (image, customization, price, styling, product reliability); staging and pacing (speed of expansion, sequence of initiatives); and economic logic (lowest cost through scale, scope, or replication advantages; premium prices due to unmatchable service or proprietary product features). While this is an excellent checklist with which to gauge the completeness of a strategy, however, it offers no specific advice about how to actually write these strategies. A helpful tool for codifying and controlling strategies is the Balanced Scorecard which is based on the idea of cybernetic control of a limited amount of goals in several so-called *perspectives* (Kaplan & Norton, 1992; Butler, Letza, & Neale, 1997). Since its emergence in the early 1990s, this instrument has undergone several development cycles. Most notable among them are the introduction of *strategy maps* (Olve, Roy, & Wetter, 1999), which constitute visual representations of the linkages between balanced scorecard elements, and the inclusion of *destination statements* (Lawrie & Cobbold, 2004) that describe the desired strategic end-state.

Owing to the combined facts that business schools tend to be subject to a complex set of influence factors, that administrators frequently come from non-business backgrounds, and that academics (and academic administrators) usually do many things simultaneously (and thus may be unable to devote sufficient attention to the strategy task), a business school's strategy should be as simple as possible (but as complex as necessary). The balanced scorecard approach helps to focus on what the school considers the most important aspects of its operations, thereby incidentally also reducing data gathering requirements.

Because of the business school's particular nature, some adaptations to the standard balanced scorecard perspectives need to be made. In the end, the selection of specific perspectives, goals and objectives is part of the strategy development process. In this paper, the following generic perspectives are proposed as appropriate for business schools (although a school may, of course, adapt these as it sees fit): reputation, portfolio, financial, international, and customer (or student).

Reputation goals are important because a business school's reputation is its main capital and will be a major determinant of student numbers, the ability for premium pricing, or the quality of faculty the school is able to attract (who, in turn, will further contribute to its reputation). The school must determine what image it wants to project and what contributing factors (core topics, famous faculty members, high-level events, and so on) are.

Regarding *portfolio* goals, the business school must actively think about which programs and services (such as custom training or consulting) it wants to offer at which level. Too many of these will impact on quality, too few may hurt revenue, and what disciplines they cover constitutes part of the school's public profile, which in turn influences its reputation.

The *financial* perspective deals with appropriate revenue and profit targets. Like any business, a business school must acquire adequate funds to achieve long-term sustainable development, regardless of whether it is privately or publicly funded. As such, the school must determine how this should be ensured and, following Hambrick & Fredrickson (2005), what the economic logic of operations (premium margins through differentiation or economies of scale) should be.

The *international* perspective covers goals related to "internationalization at home" (e.g. what percentage of modules should be offered in a foreign language or what the ratio of foreign to domestic faculty members should be), the school's international network (e.g. number, type, level, and distribution of partner universities abroad), student and faculty mobility (e.g. what percentage of students should complete an exchange term abroad), and international projects (e.g. number of projects for foreign clients or percentage of funding from international sources).

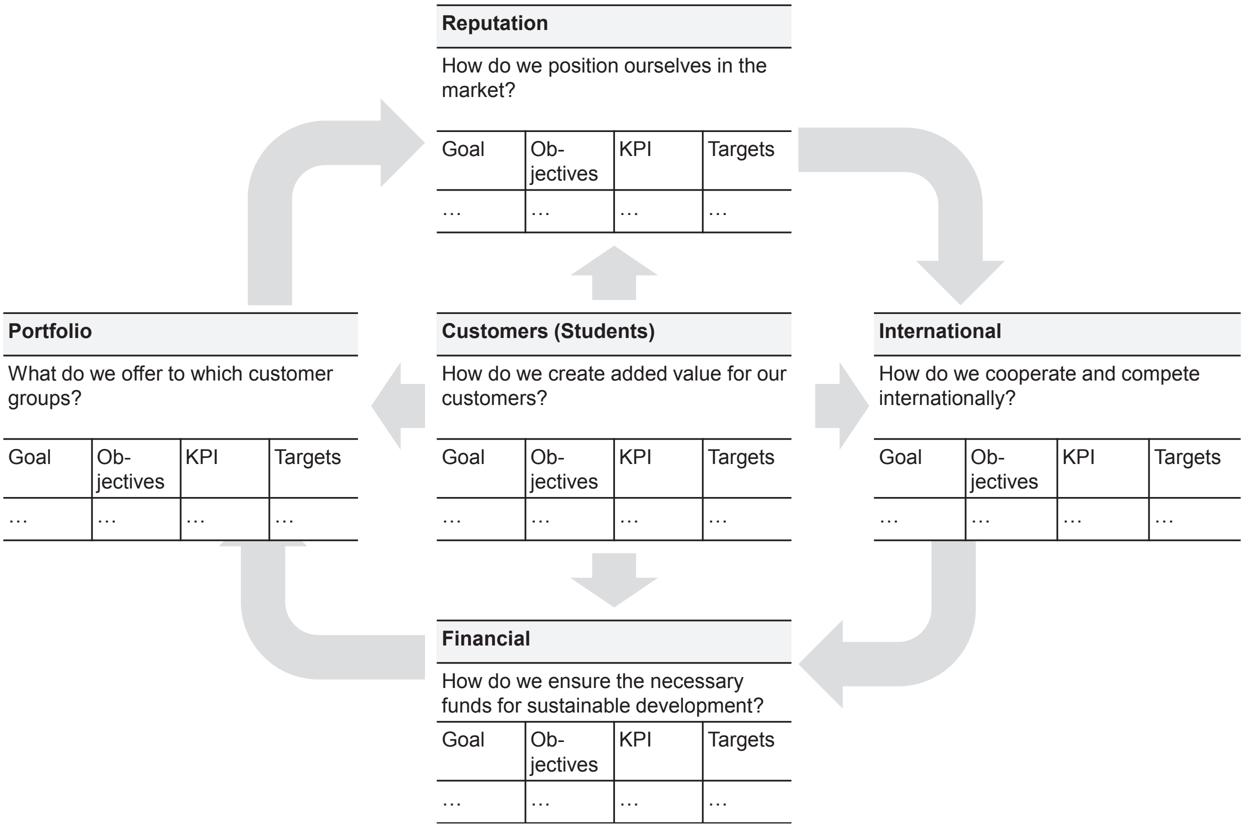
Finally, the *customer* perspective defines the added value offered to students and training participants, such as lowest price, best online learning integration, access to a strong, world-wide alumni network, or the chance to qualify for membership in professional associations.

Once the overall goals have been determined, they need to be further fleshed out. In order to developing meaningful strategic targets within the various perspectives, a cascading approach is recommended. *Goals* are the actual strategic (long-term) goals the business school pursues. *Objectives* are operationalizations of these goals. A strategic goal may contain one or several strategic objectives, but the overall amount of objectives should stay within manageable proportions. For example, a reputation-related strategic goal may be "to be number one" within the school's area of influence. Several strategic objectives could then detail what exactly is meant by this (e.g. market share, press coverage, opinions of chief executives, et cetera). *Key performance indicators* (KPI) are measurements used to evaluate performance relevant to a particular objective. They need to fulfill the following requirements: one, they must be suitable for measuring progress vis-à-vis a particular objective, and two, the organization must be able to reliably acquire the necessary data. Finally, *targets* are destination statements about the strategic end-state envisioned for a particular KPI (e.g. "30%" for market share).

Figure 5 summarizes these deliberations.

The actual strategy document that results from this process will typically consist of a cover sheet, an introductory section which explains the background and major influence factors (such as the key drivers of change and the organization's capabilities and weaknesses) on which the strategy is based, and one to two pages per perspective above. Whether the document is distributed only to a small circle of people (such as the university president and the business school's board) or to a broader audience depends on factors such as the intensity of competition or the organizational culture. Generally speaking, transparency seems to be conducive to the successful implementation of strategies (Berggren & Bernstein, 2007).

Figure 5 | Schematic Balanced Scorecard for the Business School



Source: Author; adapted from Kaplan & Norton (1992), Lawrie & Cobbold (2004).

In addition to its competitive strategy, the business school may also develop a functional strategy that outlines goals for areas such as information and communication technology, human resources, marketing, or facility management. To be consistent, the same basic structure as above may be used (goal, objective, KPI, targets).

Tactical Level: Medium-Term Plan – The medium-term plan breaks down the strategic end-state described in the long-term strategy into several (usually yearly) steps. Normally, this plan will consider between three and five years, depending on the organization's planning horizon, and is rolling (meaning each year the previous first year in the plan is taken out, the previous second year now becomes the first year, and a new year is added at the end). The medium-term plan thus closely reflects the strategic plan and breaks it down into individual steps and milestones so the organization's management and employees can set their sights on achieving those steps and keep track of how far the overall goals and objectives are reached already.

An example of a possible document structure is provided in Table 5.

Table 5 | Sample Medium-Term Plan Structure

Perspective	Goal	Objective	KPI	Target (End-State)	Strategic Steps 2016	2017	2018	2019
Reputation	…	…	…	…	…	…	…	…
		…	…	…	…	…	…	…
	…	…	…	…	…	…	…	…
Portfolio	…	…	…	…	…	…	…	…
	…	…	…	…	…	…	…	…
		…	…	…	…	…	…	…
	…	…	…	…	…	…	…	…
Customers (Students)	…	…	…	…	…	…	…	…
	…	…	…	…	…	…	…	…
Financial	…	…	…	…	…	…	…	…
		…	…	…	…	…	…	…
	…	…	…	…	…	…	…	…
		…	…	…	…	…	…	…
		…	…	…	…	…	…	…
International	…	…	…	…	…	…	…	…
		…	…	…	…	…	…	…
	…	…	…	…	…	…	…	…
		…	…	…	…	…	…	…

Source: Author

In this medium-term plan, the goals, objectives, KPIs and targets are straight transcriptions from the long-term strategic plan. Although this information is therefore redundant, it is recommended to include it nonetheless to make the cascade more transparent, i.e. demonstrate (without having to consult further documents) which medium-term steps and milestones contribute to reaching which long-term strategic goals, and thus contribute to aligning the organization.

A simple medium-term plan could well be just one page long. As with the long-term strategy, however, real-life medium-term plans will usually have a cover sheet, an introductory section explaining the background and linkages to the strategy, and then half a page to one page per perspective.

Operational Level: Short-Term Plans – The operational plan details the steps and milestones for the upcoming operational period (usually a year, although in the case of business schools this may frequently be an academic year rather than a calendar year, if the two are different) and includes the strategic steps (as detailed in the medium-term plan) for this period. For each step, the school then determines one or several specific measures that need to be implemented in the upcoming period and by when (usually in which quarter of the year) each must be completed. The operational plan may also include a section that can be used to track actual progress.

Table 6 summarizes these deliberations.

Table 6 | Sample Operational Plan Structure

Strategic Step		Measures		Completion (Plan)*				Progress (Actual)*				Comments
No.	Description	No.	Description	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
1.	…	1.1	…	X								
		1.2	…		X							
2.	…	2.1	…		X							
		2.2	…			X						
		2.3	…				X					
…	…	…	…	…	…	…	…					

* Q = quarter

Source: Author

Reviewing the Strategy

Table 7 | Business School Strategy Review Documents

Level	Documents	Function	Outlook	Frequency e.g.
Norma-tive/ Strategic	Strategic Situation Analysis (SSA)	Systematic analysis of external and internal factors in order to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, and thereby determining if the mission and/or strategy need to be revised.	Rolling (as far forward as possible)	Yearly
Strategic	Strategy Tracking Report (STR)	A short report indicating progress towards reaching strategic goals and objectives.	Long-term	Yearly
Tactical	Medium-term Plan Progress Report (MPPR)	A short report indicating progress towards reaching medium-term goals (strategic steps).	Medium-term	Twice yearly
Tactical	Key Perfor-mance Indi-cator Report (KPIR)	A short report indicating Key Performance Indicator targets, levels, and trends (often combined with the MPPR).	On-going	Twice yearly
Opera-tional	Short-term Plan Progress Report (SPPR)	A report indicating progress towards completing specific measures set forth in the short-term plan (often, the plan itself is used as the basis for the report by adding progress information and comments).	Short-term	Quarterly

Source: Author

Once developed and in the process of being implemented, the strategy's fit with the organization's environment should be reviewed periodically and revised as necessary. This kind of strategy controlling depends on a clear understanding of the external and internal environment of the business school as well as performance and progress within key areas. Table 7 lists the corresponding strategy review documents that provide this overview, including the strategic situation analysis described above which should be regularly updated. In fact, review documents should be produced in the frequency set out in the strategic planning cycle and will usually form the basis for the corresponding deliberations during board-level and/or faculty meetings.

The review should include deliberations about the sustainability of the strategy in question, e.g. by following the process outlined in Schüz (2014).

4. Summary and Conclusions

The framework introduced in this paper is intended for practitioners, i.e. those writing actual strategies for business schools. It follows the strategy hierarchy (mission; competitive and functional strategy; medium-term plan; short-term plan/s) and planning cycle (strategic situation analysis; strategy review decision; necessary reviews or updates to the strategy, medium-term, and short-term plan/s) and consists of a number of logical steps that take the user through the process of crafting a coherent strategy that fits the school's external and internal environment, monitoring the environment, and regularly reconsidering the strategy's appropriateness to changes in said environment. Examples of how corresponding analytical forms could be structured were provided.

Following this framework will not in itself guarantee success but it will help to formalize the strategy process of the business school which, as outlined in the literature review, has been found to be helpful for performance.

5. Limitations

This paper focuses on strategy development, leaving out the important topic of strategy implementation. Also, the framework postulated in this paper has been developed and tested for use in business schools. As such, it may or may not be appropriate for other educational institutions. Additionally, the whole area of discipline portfolio selection (i.e. which academic disciplines to cover and how to organize around them) which a university as a whole may face (provided it has the freedom to actually make such choices) has been left out completely. From the perspective of the overall university, the business school represents one, of potentially many, 'businesses', and the university board (or the board of a private company that owns the business school) may potentially decide to cease competing in this market if it becomes too unattractive. The business school itself does not have that luxury (unless it wants to shut itself down), and as indicated in the corresponding section the determination of industry attractiveness during the strategic situation analysis may thus have more of a *pro forma* character. With these caveats, however, the straight-forward and comparatively simple strategic planning and review process detailed in this paper should work just fine for educational institutions outside of business and economics.

References

Akbar Ahmadi, S. A., Salamzadeh, Y., Daraei, M., & Akbari, J. (2012). Relationship between Organizational Culture and Strategy Implementation: Typologies and Dimensions, *Global Business & Management Research: An International Journal*, 4(3/4): 286-299.

Aldehayyat, J. S., & Twaissi, N. (2011). Strategic Planning and Corporate Performance Relationship in Small Business Firms: Evidence from a Middle East Country Context, *International Journal of Business and Management*, 6(8): 255-263.

Alexander, K. (2006). Advancing Strategic Planning, *Frontiers of Health Services Management*, 23(2): 39-41.

Al-Shammari, H. A., & Hussein, R. (2007). Strategic Planning-Firm Performance Linkage: Empirical Investigation from an Emerging Markets Perspective, *Advances in Competitiveness Research*, 15(1/2): 15-26.

Alter, R. (2013). *Strategisches Controlling - Unterstützung des strategischen Managements*, 2nd ed., München: Oldenbourg.

Al-Turki, U. (2011). A Framework for Strategic Planning in Maintenance, *Journal of Quality in Maintenance Engineering*, 17(2): 150-162.

Ang, J. S., & Chua, J. H. (1979). Long Range Planning in Large United States Corporations: A Survey, *Long Range Planning*, 12: 99-102.

Ansoff, H. I. (1972). The Concept of Strategic Management, *Journal of Business Policy*, 2(4): 3-9.

Aram, J. D., & Cowen, S. S. (1990). Strategic Planning for Increased Profit in Small Business, *Long Range Planning*, 23(6): 63-70.

Bartling, A. C. (1997). 25 Pitfalls of Strategic Planning, *Healthcare Executive*, 12(5): 20-23.

Berggren, E., & Bernstein, R. (2007). Organizational Transparency Drives Company Performance, *Journal of Management Development*, 26: 411-417.

Bishop, P., Hines, A., & Collins, T. (2007). The Current State of Scenario Development: An Overview of Techniques, *foresight*, 9(1): 5-25.

Blatstein, I. M. (2012). Strategic Planning: Predicting or Shaping the Future? *Organization Development Journal*, 30(2): 31-38.

Bleicher, K. (1991). *Organisation: Strategien–Strukturen–Kulturen, 2nd ed*., Wiesbaden: Gabler.

Brown, P. (2004). Strategic Capability Development in the Higher Education Sector, *International Journal of Educational Management*, 18(6/7): 436-445.

Bruderl, J., & Schussler, R. (1990). Organizational Mortality: The Liabilities of Newness

and Adolescence, *Strategic Management Journal*, 7: 503-522.

Büchler, J.-P. (2014). *Strategie entwickeln, umsetzen und optimieren*, Hallbergmoos: Pearson.

Butler, A., Letza S. R., & Neale, B. (1997). Linking the Balanced Scorecard to Strategy, *Long Range Planning*, 30(2): 242-253

Campos, E. B., & Sanchez, S. P. (2003). Knowledge Management in the Emerging Strategic Business Process: Information, Complexity and Imagination, *Journal of Knowledge Management*, 7(2): 5-17.

Chandler, A.D. (1962). *Strategy and Structure: Chapters in the History of the Industrial Enterprise*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Chou, M.-J. (2006). *A Strategic Process – A Planning Model for a Taiwanese Hospital Group*, University of South Carolina Doctoral Dissertation.

Connor, T. (2002). The Resource-Based View of Strategy and its Value to Practicing Managers, *Strategic Change*, 11(6): 307-316.

Covey, S. R. (1989). *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, New York: Simon and Schuster.

Cruceru, A. (2015). SMEs and Strategic Management Based on Knowledge, *Romanian Economic and Business Review*, 10(2): 163-170.

Day, G. S. (1990). *Market Driven Strategy: Processes for Creating Value*, New York: Free Press.

Desai, A. B. (2000). Does Strategic Planning Create Value? The Stock Market's Belief, *Management Decision*, 38(10): 685-693.

DeSarbo, W. S., Di Benedetto, C. A., Song, M., & Sinha, I. (2005). Revisiting the Miles and Snow Framework: Uncovering Interrelationships Between Strategic Types, Capabilities, Environmental Uncertainty, and Firm Performance, *Strategic Management Journal*, 26: 47-74.

DeSarbo, W. S., Grewal, R., Hwang, H., & Wang, Q. (2008). The Simultaneous Identification of Strategic/Performance Groups and Underlying Dimensions for Assessing an Industry's Competitive Structure, *Journal of Modelling in Management*, 3(3): 220-238.

Dincer, O., Tatoglu, E., & Glaister, K. W. (2006). The Strategic Planning Process: Evidence from Turkish Firms, *Management Research News*, 29(4): 206-219.

Dixit, G. K., & Nanda, T. (2011). Strategic Alignment of Organizational Culture and Climate for Stimulating Innovation in SMEs*, International Journal of Innovation, Management and Technology*, 2(1): 77.85.

Dranove, D., Peteraf, M., & Shanley, M. (1998). Do Strategic Groups Exist? An Economic Framework for Analysis, *Strategic Management Journal*, 19(11): 1029-1044.

Dudik, E. (2000). *Strategic Renaissance*, New York: American Management Association.

Files, L. A. (1983). Strategy Formulation and Strategic Planning in Hospitals: Application of an Industrial Model, *Hospital and Health Services Administration*, 28: 9-20.

Flavian, C., & Polo, Y. (1999). Strategic Groups Analysis (SGA) as a Tool for Strategic Marketing, *European Journal of Marketing*, 33(5/6): 548-569.

Freund, Y. P. (1988). Critical Success Factors, *Planning Review*, 16(4): 20 – 23.

Gardner, J. (1964). Self-Renewal: *The Individual and the Innovative Society*, New York: Norton.

Glaister, K. W., Dincer, O., Tatoglu, E., & Demirbag, M. (2009). A Comparison of Strategic Planning Practices in Companies from the UK and Turkey, *Journal of Management Development*, 28(4): 361-379.

Glaister, K. W., Dincer, O., Tatoglu, E., Demirbag, M., & Zaim, S. (2008). A Causal Analysis of Formal Strategic Planning and Firm Performance: Evidence from an Emerging Country, *Management Decision*, 46(3): 365-391.

Hage, J., & Aiken, M. (1970). *Social Change in Complex Organizations,* New York: Random House.

Hahn, W., & Powers, T. L. (2010). Strategic Plan Quality, Implementation Capability, and Firm Performance, *Academy of Strategic Management Journal*, 9 (1): 63-81.

Hall, R. (1977). *Organizations: Structure and Process, 2nd ed.,* Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Hambrick, D. C., & Fredrickson, J. W. (2005). Are you sure you have a strategy? *Academy of Management Executive*, 2005, 19(4): 51-62.

Hewlett, C. A. (1999). Strategic Planning for Real Estate Companies, *Journal of Property Management*, 64(1): 26-29.

Hubbard, G., Pocknee, G., & Taylor, G. A. (1997). *Practical Australian Strategy,* Sidney: Prentice Hall.

Jennings, D., & Disney, J. J. (2006). Designing the Strategic Planning Process: Does Psychological Type Matter?, *Management Decision*, 44(5): 598-614.

Johnson, G., Scholes, K., & Whittington, R. (2011). *Exploring Strategy, 9th ed*., Essex: FT Prentice Hall.

Kaplan, R. S., & Norton, D. P. (1992). The Balanced Scorecard: Measures That Drive Performance, *Harvard Business Review* (January–February): 71–79.

Kemelgor, B., Johnson, H., & Srinivasan, S. D. (2000). Forces Driving Organizational Change: A Business School Perspective, *Journal of Education for Business*; 3: 133-137.

Kenville, K. (2005). *Flying Through Crisis: An Analysis of the Strategic Planning Processes at Large Hub Airports in the United States*, Capella University Doctoral Dissertation.

Khalifa, A. S. (2010). Rethinking the Current Dominant Approach to Business School Strategy, *European Business Review*, 22(6): 591-607.

Khuong, L. H. (2002. *The Effects of Long-Range Strategic Planning and its Impact on Financial Performance and Growth of Companies in the Lime Industry*, Nova Southeastern University Doctoral Dissertation.

Lawrie, G. J. G., & Cobbold, I. (2004). Third Generation Balanced Scorecard: Evolution of an Effective Strategic Control Tool, *International Journal of Productivity and Performance Management*, 53(7): 611–623.

Lynn, D. (2000). Strategic Planning into the New Millennium, *Bank News*, 100(4): 55-58.

Mazzarol, T. (1998). Critical Success Factors for International Education Marketing, *International Journal of Educational Management*, 12(4): 163 – 175.

McKinsey, J. (1922). *Budgetary Control*, New York: Ronald Press Company.

McLarney, C. (2003). A Driving Force: An Analysis of Strategic Planning in the Canadian Automotive Industry, *Business Process Management Journal*, 9(4): 421-439.

Meissner, P. (2014). A Process-Based Perspective on Strategic Planning: The Role of Alternative Generation and Information Integration, *Business Research*, 7: 105-124.

Miller, C. C., & Cardinal, L. B. (1994). Strategic Planning and Firm Performance: A Synthesis of More, *Academy of Management Journal*, 37: 1649-65.

Mintzberg, H. (1980). The Design School: Reconsidering the Basic Premises of Strategic Management, *Strategic Management Journal*, 11(3): 171-195.

Mintzberg, H. (1994). The Fall and Rise of Strategic Planning, *Harvard Business Review*, 72: 107-114.

Mishra, P., Dangayach, G. S., & Mittal, M. L. (2011). An Empirical Study on Identification of Critical Success Factors in Project Based Organizations, *Global Business and Management Research*, 3(3/4): 356-368.

Moldof, E. P. (1994). Do-it-yourself strategic planning provides map to the future, *Healthcare Financial Management*, 48(2): 26-31.

Morgan, J. R. (2004). *Business Strategic Planning Practices and Mission-Achievement in Faith-based Organization*s, Capella University Doctoral Dissertation.

Olve, N.-G., Roy, J., & Wetter, M. (1999). *Performance Drivers: A Practical Guide to Using the Balanced Scorecard*, New York: Wiley.

O'Regan, N., & Ghobadian, A. (2002). Effective Strategic Planning in Small and Medium-Sized Firms, *Management Decision*, 40(7/8): 663-671.

Parnell, J. A. (2011). Strategic Capabilities, Competitive Strategy, and Performance among Retailers in Argentina, Peru and the United States, *Management Decision*, 49(1): 130-155.

Patnaik, R. (2012). Strategic Planning Through Complexity: Overcoming Impediments to Forecast and Schedule, *The IUP Journal of Business Strategy*, 9(1): 27-36.

Porter, M. E. (1985). *Competitive Advantage: Creating and Sustaining Superior Performance*, New York: Simon & Schuster.

Porter, M.E. (1980). *Competitive Strategy*, New York: Free Press.

Porter, M.E. (2008). The Five Competitive Forces That Shape Strategy, *Harvard Business Review,* January 2008.

Robertson, D. (1993). Establishing Strategic Direction in Higher Education Institutions, *Public Money & Management*, 13(3): 45-51.

Robertson, P. J., Roberts, D. R., & Porras, J. I. (1993). Dynamics of Planned Organizational Change, *Academy of Management Journal*, 36: 619-34.

Russel, R. K., & Tippett, D. D. (2008). Critical Success Factors for the Fuzzy Front End of Innovation in the Medical Device Industry, *Engineering Management Journal*, 20 (3): 36-43.

Schraeder, M. (2002). A Simplified Approach to Strategic Planning: Practical Considerations and an Illustrated Example, *Business Process Management Journal*, 8(1): 8-18.

Schüz, M. (2014). Developing Sustainably Responsible Strategies in Business, in: Molthan-Hill, P. (ed.), *The Business Student's Guide to Sustainable Management – Principles and Practices,* Edinburgh: Greenleaf, 242-278.

Shaw, D., Hall, M., Edwards, J. S., & Baker, B. (2007). Responding to Crisis through Strategic Knowledge Management, *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, 20(4): 569-578.

Simon, A., & Kumar, V. (2001). Clients' Views on Strategic Capabilities Which Lead to Management Consulting Success, *Management Decision*, 39 (5/6): 362-372.

Stalk, G., Evans, P., & Shulman, L. E. (1992). Competing on Capabilities: The New Rules of Corporate Strategy, *Harvard Business Review*, 70(2): 57-69.

Steiner, G. (1963). *Managerial Long-Range Planning*, New York: McGraw Hill.

The Economist (2014). *Those who Can't, Teach*, http://www.economist.com/node/21595929, retrieved 2014-03-25.

Thompson, J. (1967). *Organizations in Action: Social Science Bases of Administrative Theory*, New York: McGraw Hill.

Volberda, H. W. (2004). Crisis in Strategy: Fragmentation, Integration or Synthesis, *European Management Review*, 1(1): 35-42.

Ward, J. M. (1988). Information Planning for Strategic Advantage, *Journal of Information Technology*, 3(3): 169-177.

Weihrich, H. (1982). The TOWS Matrix—A Tool for Situational Analysis, *Long Range Planning*, 15(2): 54-66.

Welsh, D. H. B., & Carraher, S. M. (2009). An Examination of the Relationship between the Mission of the University, the Business School, and the Entrepreneurship Center: An Application of Chandler's Strategy and Structure Hypothesis, *Journal of Applied Management and Entrepreneurship*, 14(4): 5-37.

Wilhelm, S., Gueldenberg, S., & Güttel, W. (2013). Do You Know Your Valuable Customers?, *Journal of Knowledge Management*, 17(5): 661-676.

Wilkinson, C. (2011). Strategic Navigation: In Search of an Adaptable Mode of Strategic Spatial Planning Practice, *The Town Planning Review*, 82(5): 595-612.

Zuckerman, A. M. (2003). A Call for Better Strategic Planning, *Health Forum Journal*, 46(1): 25-29.

Author

Daniel Seelhofer

Department of International Business
Zurich University of Applied Sciences, School of Management and Law
Stadthausstrasse 14, CH-8401 Winterthur, Switzerland
seda@zhaw.ch

The author would like to thank Jörg Wendel and Kathrin Raess for their input and helpful comments.